

Community resources

[Follow us on Twitter](#) [Check our Reddit](#) [Twitter this](#) [Digg this page](#) [Contact us on IRC](#)

courage is contagious

Viewing cable 06MANAGUA1731, NICARAGUA ELECTIONS: FSLN CONFIDENT OF FIRST ROUND

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06MANAGUA1731**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06MANAGUA1731	2006-08-09 22:39	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Managua

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758467.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758468.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758464.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4103/la-embusa-y-el-gabinete-de-ortega>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4104/d-rsquo-escoto-en-onu-ldquo-un-desafio-de-ortega-a-ee-uu-rdquo>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4102/estrada-y-la-ldquo-doble-cara-rdquo-ante-ee-uu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3966/la-ldquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-ee-uu-en-el-2006>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2758764.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2758753.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4041/millones-de-dolares-sin-control-y-a-discrecion>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4040/la-ldquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-venezuela-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4047/rodrigo-barreto-enviado-de-ldquo-vacaciones-rdquo>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2757239.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2746658.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2757244.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2746673.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3991/dra-yadira-centeno-desmiente-cable-diplomatico-eeuu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3968/pellas-pronostico-a-eeuu-victoria-de-ortega-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-ldquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

VZCZCXYZ0001
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHMU #1731/01 2212239
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 092239Z AUG 06
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7193
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0748
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 3758
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 001731

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/08/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [SOCI](#) [NU](#)
SUBJECT: NICARAGUA ELECTIONS: FSLN CONFIDENT OF FIRST ROUND
VICTORY

REF: A. MANAGUA 1565
[1](#)B. 05 MANAGUA 2806

Classified By: Ambassador Paul Trivelli for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: With FSLN internal polls supposedly demonstrating an 8-10 point lead over the nearest challenger, FSLN Foreign Affairs officer Samuel Santos is confident that perennial FSLN presidential candidate Daniel Ortega can win in the first round of elections. The FSLN's confidence was further demonstrated by the party's recent proposal to repeal the constitutional reforms earlier enacted (and then postponed) by the PLC-FSLN pact that would significantly weaken the presidency. Santos claims that an Ortega administration desires a positive relationship with the USG and will not interfere with the market economy or withdraw from CAFTA. He does not believe that the production and distribution of cédulas (national/voter ID cards) is a major problem, although he does not deny charges of inappropriate partisan behavior on the part of Nicaragua's Supreme Electoral Council. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) FSLN Foreign Affairs officer Samuel Santos told Ambassador, DCM and poloff on August 7 that he is confident that FSLN presidential candidate Daniel Ortega can win in the first round of elections on November 5. Santos claimed that FSLN internal polls show an 8-10 point lead for Ortega over the next strongest candidate. While he would not reveal the runner up, he commented that the FSLN is more concerned about competition from the PLC than the FSLN as "Montealegre does not have real support in the interior" of Nicaragua. The FSLN plans to recruit enough fiscales (party poll watchers) to cover all of the voting tables in Nicaragua (some 11,000) "to avoid the problems that Lopez Obrador had in Mexico because his party was absent at 30 percent of the voting centers," Santos explained.

[1](#)3. (C) Ambassador queried Santos regarding the FSLN's sudden enthusiasm for a National Assembly vote to repeal constitutional reforms (currently suspended by the Ley Marco) that were earlier enacted by the PLC-FSLN pact to strip powers from the executive branch (Ref B). He responded that the FSLN is fighting an "image war" with the PLC (which has proposed a referendum on the reforms), and that many people in the party "believe in the power of the presidency." (Comment: Rather than sincere concerns regarding the existential nature of Nicaraguan government, the FSLN's sudden about-face concerning the constitutional reforms is more likely a reflection of their confidence that Ortega can win in the first round of voting. End Comment.)

¶4. (C) Ambassador challenged Santos' claim that the FSLN would like to enjoy positive relations with the USG by mentioning Ortega's July 19 speech in which he promised to discard CAFTA for ALBA (the Venezuelan alternative), plan a "mixed economy," funnel remittances through a government agency, cancel agricultural debts, and offer subsidies to a wide range of producers. Santos stated that the FSLN government plan is not yet "fully realized" and that Ortega made several promises "in the heat of the moment." He claimed that a "mixed economy" only refers to more government oversight (presumably benign) in a "few key industries" and that it would be "stupid" for the FSLN to reject CAFTA.

¶5. (C) Santos later discussed the Supreme Electoral Council (CSE) and the problems with the cedula (national/voter ID) production and distribution process (Ref A). After stating that he personally did not think that the civil registry should be part of the CSE, he downplayed the cedula problems, claiming that the vast majority of Nicaraguans have the document and recounting an anecdote in which CSE personnel visited Managua high schools, including his daughter's, to help students apply for their cedula. Santos admitted that the CSE is often overly defensive regarding criticism and emphasized the need for a "positive environment." He refused, however, to refute the Ambassador's and DCM's charges that the CSE -- a theoretically independent body -- has behaved in a partisan manner by facilitating cedula applications for FSLN members.

¶6. (C) Comment: Both ALN and FSLN representatives have recently expressed assurances in private that their candidate will win in the first round, although neither Ortega nor Eduardo Montealegre has polled above 35 percent of the vote

(in reputable, publicly released polls), the lowest threshold to enable a first-round victory (with a 5 percent lead over the next candidate). Some non-FSLN contacts insist that Ortega has reached a voter ceiling of about 32 percent, a calculation supported by the consistently large number of citizens who claim to pollsters that they would never vote for him. Nevertheless, the FSLN is clearly the best-financed party and its operatives are working diligently to push Ortega over the 35-percent threshold.

TRIVELLI